



Members of the U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC
July 12, 2013

Dear Representatives:

The Minnesota Rural Education Association (MREA), with 160 member districts in Minnesota, strongly supports the ACE, All Children are Equal, amendment.

Minnesota has a strong and long tradition of local school districts organized by towns and cities, not by county. As a result Minnesota has 335 school districts serving on average 2,475 students. Only four school districts exceed 30,000 students and two of these have higher concentrations of poverty.

Poverty in Minnesota is distributed across the state. Some of the poorest students are American Indian Students living on or near tribal nations across Northern Minnesota. The school districts serving these students would directly benefit from the elimination of the number of students weighting and using only the percentage of students living in poverty scale.

The sequester effect on Impact Aid has severely affected these districts, so to continue to not fund Title I on a percentage of poverty is compounding the problem of serving this population of students. Minnesota's American Indian Students graduation rate is half that of white students, and that achievement gap is extremely troubling and a major focus in Minnesota. Therefore, a formula that denies these students even equal funding needs to be rectified.

Therefore on general principles of equity and because of the specific demographics of Minnesota, MREA urges passage of the ACE amendment.

Sincerely,

Fred Nolan
Executive Director, MREA